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MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Director (Administration)

SUBJECT: Report on Overseas Trip made by the Personnel Director and the Comptroller during the period 27 October 1953 through 19 December 1953

1. PURPOSE.

a. To review the administrative organization, policies, practices, and in general to observe the adherence of Agency rules and regulations affecting operations relating to administrative matters.

b. In addition to the above, the trip provided an indoctrination in overseas operations for the Personnel Director and the Comptroller, neither having previously visited overseas installations although each having been employed by the Agency for a number of years; the Personnel Director for approximately seven years and the Comptroller for ten years, including predecessor organizations.

2. AREA COVERED.

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3. DISCUSSION.

a. Each visit consisted of a general discussion with the Senior Representative and/or Station Chief which was followed by a group meeting of key personnel. In many of the smaller stations the entire staff was included. At each of these meetings an up-to-date, realistic, budgetary, personnel and career service picture was presented. This presentation was followed by a question and answer period. These meetings generally lasted from two and a half to three and a half hours. At the larger station meetings, the key personnel were requested to advise their personnel that the Personnel Director and the Comptroller were available to anyone desiring to discuss a problem or just to exchange greetings. At some of the stations, particularly the smaller stations, the undersigned personally met and discussed subjects of a particular interest to each employee and also personal problems if brought to our attention.

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b. Following these meetings, discussions were held with the Station Chief, Administrative Officer, and Finance Officer relative to such subjects as: receipt of 1st and 2nd quarter allotments of funds; housing; schooling; allowances; travel and transportation; leave; tours of duty; tables of organization; furnishing of furniture and household effects by the Agency; use of Agency [REDACTED] cars; etc.

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d. The subjects more frequently mentioned by the field personnel as needing additional attention from headquarters were: (1) time consumed in effecting [REDACTED] (2) the lowering of morale in clerical and stenographic categories being brought about as a result of the three-year tour of duty; (3) administrative difficulties which will be caused by the decision to equip field personnel with complete house furnishings in certain areas; (4) delay in receiving replies from headquarters relative to questions and problems submitted by the field; (5) furnishing of copies of administrative plans to the field of subsidy, proprietary and other projects; (6) the assignment of additional administrative duties to the field.

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The consensus of opinion of field personnel was that every effort

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It was reported that [REDACTED] also was beginning to feel the effects of the lowering of morale and the consequent increased number of resignations among the clerical forces because of the three-year tour policy. The general feeling throughout the field was that the clerical personnel, not being strictly career employees in every respect, should be continued on the basis of a two-year tour of duty.

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The new policy of providing home furnishings to all personnel in certain areas is recommended for a careful restudy. Many of the field personnel are of the opinion that some or all of the following administrative and security difficulties created by this policy suggest the need for a re-evaluation of our present policy on this subject: (1) tours

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of duty do not exactly coincide with replacement; [REDACTED]

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replacement; (4) differences in demands and tastes between individuals; (5) reluctance on the part of some to accept furnishings used by others; (6) a variety of customs and tax and resale problems differing with each country; (7) lack of warehousing space and personnel to store, guard and maintain surpluses created by changing demands or lapses in arrival of replacements; (8) the economy factor largely being ruled out because our agreement with [REDACTED] included reimbursement on a flat basis for the maximum allowable on shipment of household effects; therefore, shipping charges were paid notwithstanding the fact that furnishings were purchased in the field; and (9) the problem that will be created when [REDACTED]

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The complaint of the long delay in receiving replies to field inquiries seemed to be almost universal throughout, but there is an encouraging note since the delay in receiving replies is not quite as long as it used to be.

The field was assured that the furnishing of copies of administrative plans for projects was receiving the attention of headquarters. In fact, it was noted that several had already been received at one of the stations.

There was a general feeling that more and more administrative duties were being imposed upon the field without assigning any additional personnel to assist in the heavy workload, such as the keeping of property inventories, handling of Agency furniture, detailed accounting and reporting, assisting in the decentralized audit, etc.

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f. The numerous individual problems or requests for information on specific subjects brought to the attention of the undersigned during the trip will be handled with the various divisions concerned and prompt notification given to the field of the action taken in each case.

g. With the exception of a few stenographic and clerical personnel who expressed their dissatisfaction over the change in policy on the three-year tour of duty, it can be reported that the morale of our personnel is generally high and that as a group they appear to be very well informed as to their duties and are highly motivated.

h. It is believed that the trip, in addition to giving the Offices of the Comptroller and the Personnel Director a much needed view of day-to-day overseas field operations and working conditions, provided the field personnel with an opportunity to express their views to representatives of topside management on a variety of administrative problems. It is recommended that additional trips of this kind be scheduled in order to bring about the required mutual understanding between operations and central administration personnel.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS.

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b. That the present policy of supplying furniture by the Agency be restudied with the view in mind of supplying furniture only in specific cases and then only on the approval of the Senior Representative and/or Chief of Station. Due to the many problems connected with the supplying

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of furniture by the Agency, the undersigned questions the advisability of the Agency continuing such a program, both from an operational and economical standpoint.

c. That a follow-up system be established on field inquiries by each Office in order to expedite replies to the field.

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e. That serious consideration be given to not sending personnel with school age children to overseas areas where the lack of suitable school facilities or the cost of schooling creates a true hardship on the employee concerned. Exceptions to this proposed policy should be granted only if the employee is thoroughly briefed on the subject and is able to assume the financial burden without creating a personal hardship. If legally possible, partial or complete cost of schooling should be assumed by the Agency in cases where the possession of a rare skill or other operational requirements necessitate the assignment of an employee to such areas if a real hardship is created by such an assignment.

f. That no personnel be assigned overseas who have financial problems. (Some personnel have arrived without sufficient funds to pay normal living expenses until the next payday, besides being already heavily in debt.)

Items e. and f. should be made part of the clearance procedure and each employee assigned overseas should be required to sign a statement as to his financial ability to meet the necessary expenses.

GEORGE E. MELOON
Personnel Director

E. R. SAUNDERS
Comptroller

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